

## **LIVING IN THE HOUSE**

### **Eating/Kitchen**

Lunch is the main meal and is served buffet-style. It's normal Ecuadorian food with a main dish, rice, sometimes soup and juice (sometimes fresh fruit juice, sometimes from a mix). We have a cook that makes lunch Monday—Saturday. Breakfast and dinner are on your own, but the food is provided (the ingredients/basics/staples in order to actually prepare and cook meals with).

Suggestions: rolls, hot chocolate, fruit for breakfast; leftovers from lunch, tuna or egg sandwich, spaghetti, for dinner. Food in the volunteer fridges and cabinets is up for grabs, unless it has someone's name on it. (Cuenca: the first house kitchen is off-limits because it's specifically for the cook, and any food in that kitchen has been asked for in advance in order to prepare good lunches for you; don't use it; also, don't use any pots/pans, dishes, etc. in there.) You're welcome to cook or bake anything you'd like with the ingredients we have or purchase your own. The fruit in the fruit baskets has been cleaned/bleached and is safe to eat.

You're expected to do your own breakfast and dinner dishes and also the dishes from when you cook. Please clean up after yourselves. Please scrape off food from your plates in the trash before washing your dishes. This is VERY important—we don't have garbage disposals. Two volunteers will be assigned each night to clean the kitchen and dining room. There's a kitchen duty list. We've found that doing this makes a HUGE difference in the cleanliness of the house. We have group dinners on Sunday, and we generally assign a couple/few volunteers to make it and have a treat of some sort; everyone helps clean up afterward.

### **Linens**

Each bed should have sheets, a pillow case, two heavy blankets, a light bedspread and a pillow. A towel is also provided. If you're cold and need an extra heavy blanket, contact the Housing Committee. The two heavy blankets you're given when you arrive are the blankets you have for your use during your entire stay—don't take them out and get them dirty. Heavy blankets CANNOT and SHOULD NOT ever be washed in the washing machines—they're too big and heavy for them and have broken them in the past when volunteers ignored this. We have the blankets cleaned professionally after each group leaves and before the new group arrives. No more than two bedspreads should ever be washed at the same time. You're responsible for washing your own linens—please wash them several times during your stay. Extras can be found in the storage room, if necessary. If you need to “de-flea” your heavy blanket or bedspread, you can put them (dry) in the dryer and run it for 20 minutes on high heat. Mattresses can be de-flea'd on the balcony on a sunny day. Please don't forget to bring them in.

### **Laundry**

We have two washers and two dryers for the entire group as well as places to hang laundry. There will be a laundry schedule posted. Please do not start laundry after 10 at night or before 7 in the morning. Use the time settings on the dryer at night. We provide laundry detergent. Do not put someone else's clothes in the dryer; you can take them out of the washing machine and leave them on top of the dryer or in a laundry basket. You may not keep dirty or clean clothes in the laundry room. Any dirty household laundry, however, may be kept here to await washing. Please be careful when using bleach so that no splatters are left uncleaned. We prefer you don't do any laundry on Sunday but recognize there are emergencies.

**Quiet Time**

10 pm—7 am is quiet time. Voices and noise are easily heard in the bedrooms when passing through the bedroom level, particularly when using the table/mirror. If anyone asks you to be quiet or turn down the TV, etc., during quiet time hours, please respect them and do so willingly. (Cuenca: no laundry can be done at this time when there are guests in the apartments. Anything said or done in the main level areas echoes and goes directly down to the basement apartments. Please be mindful of this when there are guests.) Please be mindful of those who are sleeping day or night.

**Phone Calls**

We have a land line telephone in the common areas (there's also a separate line in the office for the Project Directors). Our telephone line doesn't allow you to make long distance or collect calls to the U.S. You can reach an AT&T operator to make collect calls and to use a pre-paid calling card; ask the Project Directors for the AT&T phone number.

We also have an internet phone from which you can make free calls to the U.S. and Canada as well as receive calls (there's also a separate line in the office for the Project Directors). Even though you're in Ecuador it's like your family and friends are calling you in Utah (an 801 Utah area code). The quality of this phone depends on the internet and is sometimes down.

You'll be informed of all phone numbers on your Travel Instructions that you'll receive before you fly down.

**Mailing Address**

You can receive letters and personal packages (see guidelines and advice for this) while you're in Ecuador. You'll be given the mailing address on your Travel Instructions that you'll receive before you fly down.

**Internet**

High speed internet access is available on two OSSO computers available to the volunteers (wireless is also available in some parts of the house). One of the computers is designated for OSSO related work and work assignments will take priority. If someone needs to use it you'll need to use the other computer. Each person can use the internet for one hour per day. If you've already used your hour and no one else is waiting for a computer then you can get on, but if someone comes and wants to use it then you have to get off immediately. A sign-up sheet may be used.

**Bathrooms**

Please don't flush toilet paper or feminine products. Plumbing systems here were not designed to handle this sort of waste. Throw them into the provided wastebasket. Please empty the waste basket every few days into the large trash bin. Water pressure in the showers is often affected by water on elsewhere and by the city water. If the water is cold, it's because the gas tank attached to the water heater is empty and needs to be changed—notify the Project Directors. It takes about 30 minutes for the water to reheat. Toilet paper can be found in the storage room.

## **Cleaning Rooms**

The maid should not go in your room and therefore does not clean it. Please empty your trash regularly. A vacuum cleaner is available to vacuum your room. Please return it when finished. Please help keep your second floor landing neat and clean. You're responsible for cleaning your bedroom, and if you're in one of the bedrooms that also has a bathroom, you're responsible for cleaning your bathroom. Keep your bedrooms and bathrooms clean to prevent sickness.

## **Housekeeping Help**

The housekeeping help is responsible for cleaning the floors, stairs, common bathrooms, landings, lofts and kitchen, but they don't always know what to do with volunteer items left there. All items found by them will be placed in the baskets and taken to Distribution every week. Do not leave your things lying about. No one should ever ask you for anything. Do not give them anything (not even your personal property) without clearing it with the Project Directors first. Please notify the Project Directors if you're approached by the housekeeping staff asking you for things or money, even if it seems a worthy cause.

## **EXERCISE**

While complying with the rules, volunteers are welcome to exercise during their service time. Some acceptable examples are doing exercise videos, going running and jumping rope outside the house.

## **TV/VCR/DVD**

There is a TV/VCR/DVD available for volunteer use. Please keep these items in the specified spot at all times so that all can use them. When viewing at night, be respectful of those sleeping. Bring and view only appropriate movies. No R-rated movies are allowed period. If you rent a video you're responsible for its timely return.

## **Electricity**

Turn off the lights not in use, especially after 10 pm and after leaving computers for the night.

## **Distribution**

In "Distribution," there are shelves for items to be distributed to the orphanages and items left by previous volunteers to be used by volunteers. Items left around the house will also be placed in Distribution (if you don't want your stuff to end up here, make sure you don't leave it lying around). You're welcome to help yourself to the volunteer items. Any disbursement to the orphanages needs to be cleared first through the Project Directors. Suggestions are welcome.

## **Common Areas**

There are several common areas including the kitchen, dining room and living room (TV room). You're expected to keep these areas picked up and in good order. Visitors to our house should see a clean and orderly home, not a mess.

## **Communication Boards**

The schedule of group activities and meetings is located on the big dry-erase board. There's a smaller dry-erase board as you walk into the house—please check it and erase your messages/notes after you've received them. You have to sign out (see Code of Conduct) when

out after 7 pm. (Cuenca: there's a sign-out sheet on the bulletin board near the kitchen. Quito: there's a sign-out board just inside the door.) The bulletin board near the kitchen contains information on the shift schedule, night check log, announcements and other important information. Check it often.

### **Keys**

Cuenca: carry your keys with you at all times. Report to the Project Directors immediately if you lose your keys.

Quito: there are a couple sets of keys that you can check out if you think you'll need them (i.e. no one inside the house to let you in). Make sure you return them afterward.

### **Security**

In both cities, we have two gates/doors (an outer gate and then an inside door). The outer gate functions with an intercom buzzer where you buzz it and say your name when someone answers (and then they let you in after verifying they know you). The inside door doesn't have an intercom, but after you've identified who's at the gate you can buzz this door open along with the outer gate. You should NEVER buzz the gate open until you confirm it's someone from our group. Never leave the gates/doors open and do not let them slam shut. Do not open the gate for anyone you do not know—if you do answer the intercom buzzer and can't understand what they say and/or don't know who it is, go find the maid/cook/Project Directors.

Cuenca: an electric alarm system is installed and is set between 9:30 and 10 pm. If you're using the landline telephone right at the time the alarm system is being set for the night it'll cut off your call and the phone won't work for a minute or two. Please be aware of when the alarm is set so you don't open a window or door. If you do, the alarm will go off and the Project Directors will have to go through the entire house to find out what happened and make sure it wasn't an attempted break-in. If you do happen to set off the alarm system, please go to the second house kitchen to inform the Project Directors what happened. The alarm will be disarmed each morning at 6:20 am.

Quito: we have an active electric fence around the perimeter wall—don't touch it. We also have a 24-hour guard for our section of the neighborhood.